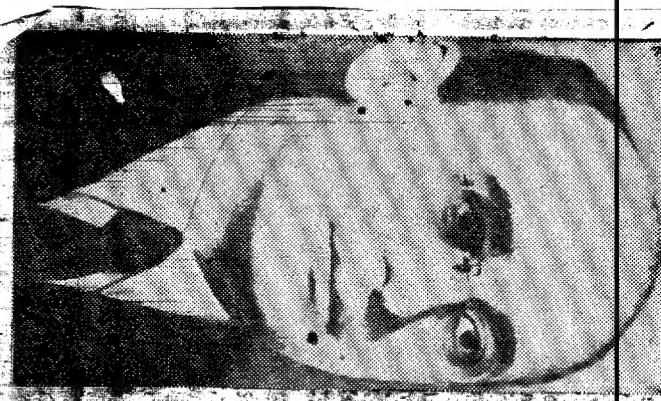


5 WITNESSES IDENTIFY SPAIN FIGURE AS BERIA



L. P. BERIA
Identified in Spain

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MADRID, Spain, Oct. 18.—The presence in Spain of a man who claims to be the purged head of the Russian secret police, Lavrenti P. Beria, has been established beyond reasonable doubt, high Spanish police officials permitted me to disclose today.

Five witnesses have identified the man as Beria from a study of Beria pictures furnished by Spanish security police.

The Spanish national police are preparing a documented report on the case for Sen. Joseph McCarthy, of the United States, and I have been asked to deliver it to him. For a month I have been working under cover with the Spanish secret police and the intermediary, Fabio Gallo, who claims that Beria has been in Spain. In that time we have established the following facts:

1.—The man called Beria was waiting at the place where I and the intermediary were to rendezvous soon after my arrival in Spain. I carried identification papers from Sen. McCarthy.

2.—That he was accompanied by two other men, one a Spaniard, the other described as a foreigner.

3.—That four persons in addition to the intermediary positively have identified photographs of the real Beria as the man they saw at the rendezvous on the beach between Malaga and Gibraltar.

This government now has ordered that any man accom-

panying the person who claims he is Beria, even though Spanish by birth, is to be declared a non-citizen and persona non grata in Spain.

This was necessary so that documents from Sen. McCarthy could be served on the men, which guarantee their protection in the United States as witnesses of a Senate committee.

Immediately after my arrival in Spain the secret police were under orders to use every facility available to place me in contact with Beria, and in return I promised not to publish anything that would endanger the chances of success in establishing contact.

The Spanish national police have kept a tight security ban on the case, and the newspaper ABC, one of the most respected in Spain, twice has had editions seized by police because of printing information on the investigation.

It is now believed by police that the intermediary, Gallo, in exile from Nicaragua, is withholding information on the whereabouts of the man he called Beria, perhaps because of fear of implicating close friends and relatives in Spain. Association with Communists would subject them to severest penalties.

Even though several attempts to establish contact with this figure have failed, police believe the investigation has paid off because it has definitely established that the man is or was here.

Police consider Spain as the logical hiding place for Beria, if he did escape from Russia, because there are no known Communist agents operating in Spain who might

(Continued on page 2, Col. 1)

Witnesses in Spain Call Fugitive Beria

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(Continued from Page 1)

liquidate him before he could trade Russian secrets for a sanctuary.

The rendezvous arranged for contact with the so-called Beria was a beach in front of a large farm located between Malaga and Gibraltar on the Mediterranean coast.

The man carried out specific arrangements which had been made with Gallo, and appeared at the appointed time on the designated beach, walking with two companions. The promise, according to police investigation of the case, was to surrender to a qualified representative of the United States.

Gallo, however, did not appear at the rendezvous—he was in custody of local Malaga police at the time as a result of refusal to give information to a man claiming to be a representative of the United States.

This agent, when Gallo refused to cooperate with him on the ground he had not properly identified himself, called Malaga police and Gallo was held for questioning.

It was in this manner that the Spanish national police entered the case. When they established the facts, they offered full cooperation and ordered Gallo's release to carry out any new arrangements which could be made.

By that time, however, the man claiming to be Beria had disappeared—either from the country or deep into Spain's interior.

Spanish police conducted an intense search of the Malaga area, and turned up five witnesses who identified photographs of the real Beria as the man they had seen in the region.

Owners of Farm Also Are Certain

Three of these persons were Spanish people of relatively high position who owned the farm at which the rendezvous was to take place. They were on the beach at the time, they told police, and saw three strange men strolling along the edge of the water.

This was an unusual sight, as the farm is located a mile from the highway and in a lonely section of the coast. The three all identified pictures of Beria as one of the three men. One other, they said, was obviously a Spaniard and the other they described as a foreigner.

The arrangements for the beach rendezvous were made as the result of a meeting Gallo said he originally had with the man claiming to be Beria in Gibraltar. At that time Gallo was unable to deliver any assurances from the United States and a second meeting was scheduled.

The final meeting, to deliver the papers from Sen. McCarthy, was never held, as a result of Gallo's arrest.

Beria, who as head of the Russian secret police organized Red espionage through much of the world, was revealed as purged July 9 when Premier Malenkov denounced him as a "traitor and tool of foreign imperialists."

Reds Silent as to His Whereabouts

Since then nothing official has been said by the Russian government, as to his whereabouts or fate.

Gallo, wealthy Nicaraguan who dabbles in revolution and international politics, turned up in the United States and told The San Diego Union he had been asked to serve as an intermediary for four high Communists who wanted sanctuary in this country.

He asked The San Diego Union to place him in touch with high government officials. Later, in Spain, Gallo notified The San Diego Union and government officials that one of the men was Beria and he wanted guarantees from either President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon or Sen. McCarthy.

The exact source of Gallo's information has never been disclosed, though it is believed to be someone in Spain. Police are inclined to doubt that Beria could have paraded about in Spain in official capacity could have had access to any foreign documents or passports necessary to cross any border.